



Press Kit

OPEN WIDE AND SAY AWE

Title of event:	The Impresario (W.A. Mozart) – Comic Opera in One Act, Sung in English
Artistic Director:	Spencer Duncanson
Contact person:	Don Larsen (dlarsen@littleopera.ca)
Venues , Dates / Times:	Winnipeg – Aug 11 7PM – St. James Historic Church (575 Tylehurst St.) Kenora – Aug 15 2PM – Harbordome Stage(Bernier Drive)
Tickets:	Winnipeg : \$10 at the Door Kenora : \$10 in advance at Blue Heron Store and Johnson’s Pharmacy; \$12 at the door
Little Opera Co Info Line:	204.452.1017
Website:	www.littleopera.ca
Synopsis:	A frustrated impresario and his assistant (who is a comic actor with his own aspirations for stardom) are trying to establish an opera company. They are approached by a wealthy patron with a generous offer of financial support...only if they will hire two singers: first a well-known, but faded opera diva, they a young talented beginner. Both are auditioned and both are offered contracts. Sparks fly, however, when both insist on top billing!
Production and Cast:	<p>Director: Karla Weir Music Director: Spencer Duncanson Accompaniment: Cary Denby</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CAST</p> <p>Mr. Scruples (The Impresario): Don Larsen Mr. Bluff (his assistant): Greg McLean Mr. Angel (a wealthy banker): Darryl Brunger Mme Goldentrill (a faded opera star): Margot Harding Miss Silverpeal (a rising opera star): Lara Secord-Haid</p>

The Impresario

Comic Opera in One Act by W.A. Mozart, Sung in English

Artistic Director: Spencer Duncanson | Director: Karla Weir

Starring: Darryl Brunger, Margot Harding,
Greg McLean, Don Larsen, Lara Secord-Haid



WINNIPEG
August 11, 2010, 7 p.m.
Historic St. James Anglican Church
as part of the Concerts in First Church Series
525 Tylehurst Street (South of Polo Park)
Ticket Price: \$10.00
Admission at the door

little
OPERA
company

OPEN WIDE AND SAY AWE

KENORA
August 15, 2010, 2 p.m.
Kenora Harbourfront –
Kenora Harbourfront Concert Series
Bernier Drive, Kenora, ON
Ticket Price: \$10.00
Tickets available from:
Blue Heron – 321 First Avenue South
Johnson's Pharmacy – Main Street South

THE IMPRESARIO



Spencer Duncanson, Artistic / Music Director

It has been stated “The more things change the more they stay the same”.

I find it interesting that even in Mozart’s time the mounting of an opera proved to be a monumental task, daunting to the financial, logistical and emotional pockets of the most experienced impresarios. It takes a great deal of energy to both produce and participate in an opera; the singer/actor, the production crew and the audience member each have a responsibility to optimize the operatic experience. It is not a mindless art form, but one that invites everyone to participate actively; an activity that we sometimes find overwhelming.

However the rewards of allowing oneself to be immersed in the operatic experience make all of the efforts well worthwhile. An encounter with an aesthetic moment can be life changing, leaving one with a sense of enlightenment, accomplishment, and renewed energy.

Mozart’s opera, *The Impresario*, is a comic snapshot of the backstage tribulations of the theatre. While they appear humorous in this context, I assure you that in actuality they have caused many a producer of opera, film, dance, and theatre to cringe on occasion. Nonetheless, we persevere not just because we have tasted the nectar of their fruit but because these art forms surpass the individual. In the words of our opera’s impresario, Mr. Scruples: “Do not worry about art or music Madame. They have endured for centuries, generally in spite of, not because of individuals.” In concluding Mozart admonishes all participants to yield to art and in so doing enrich themselves.

I invite you to actively join us as we yield to this artistic undertaking.



Karla Weir, Director A University of Winnipeg graduate in theatre (Honors-directing) and past recipient of the Tudor Bowl Award for vocal performance, Karla has been active with many local groups and has developed a strong interest in directing and stage design.

As a performer, Karla has appeared in productions with Rainbow Stage, the Gilbert and Sullivan Society, Interesting Theatre, University of Manitoba’s Opera Workshop, Red Hen Productions, Prairie Performances, and has been a long-time member of the Manitoba Opera Chorus. She is looking forward to performing in this season’s upcoming productions of *Tosca* and *The Magic Flute*.

Directing credits include, *A Musical Journey Through Canada* for Prairie Performances. *The Medium, The Old Maid and the Thief, Face on the Barroom Floor* and *The Gift of the Magi* with the Little Opera Company. Wendy Lill’s *The Occupation of Heather Rose*, and David Gilles’ *Fade to Black*. Karla has held directing apprenticeships with Popular Theatre Alliance on the production of *Hectic* and Red Hen’s production of *Juana la loca?*. Assistant directorship roles include the Opera Project’s *Così fan tutte*, Popular Theatre Alliance’s *Hectic*, and MTC’s *Cherry Docs*.

Karla has enjoyed coaching for the Manitoba Conservatory for Music and Arts in the advanced vocal division and feels privileged to have spent the last decade designing “maquillage” for Winnipeg’s French Theatre, Le Cercle Moliere. She continues to hold master class workshops on makeup design and application for theatres and schools, as well as conducting private coaching in performance.



Cary Denby, Accompaniment Cary graduated from the Faculty of Music at the University of Manitoba in 1990 and since then, has made a living as a freelance accompanist playing for numerous choirs, soloists and ensembles. Currently, Cary is involved with the Gilbert and Sullivan Association, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and the St. James School Division. At the University of Manitoba, Faculty of Music she is involved with the Vocal Masterclasses, the Cantata Singers, as well as the Bison Men’s Chorus, conducted by her husband Steve.

The Impresario - Cast



Don Larsen (Mr. Scruples) is pleased to reprise his role as Mr. Scruples for the Little Opera Company. Previous productions with the LOC include: *Amahl and the Night Visitors (Melchior)*, *Little Red Riding Hood (Wolf)*, *Gianni Schicchi (Marco)* and *The Face on the Barroom Floor (Tom)*.

Don has also appeared in numerous choruses and roles for Rainbow Stage, The Winnipeg Gilbert and Sullivan Society and for Manitoba Opera.

In recent years, Don has been donating his managerial and design talents to the LOC organization as a Production Manager, Marketing and Promotions Manager and as their web designer. Passionate about the art form, Don hopes that his efforts all go toward exposing more people to opera.



Greg McLean (Mr. Bluff), baritone, comes with a wide range of musical theatre experience, having worked with Winnipeg's Rainbow Stage, Gilbert and Sullivan Society, Manitoba Opera, and the Little Opera Company. His favourite shows have included *The Music Man*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *South Pacific*, and *The Old Maid and the Thief*.

Greg performs as a soloist throughout Winnipeg in the pop genre, and performs choral music with Renaissance Voices and the First Lutheran Church choir. He has also appeared in productions of Prairie Performances and the Irish Club of Winnipeg. Most recently, he performed with the Canadian Musical Theatre Development Group, performing excerpts from *Les Misérables*, *Showboat* and *Strike: the Musical*.



Darryl Brunger (Mr. Angel), tenor, lives with his three children on their hobby farm in Woodlands. He has performed music of many different genres throughout his career. He plays violin, piano, guitar, banjo and mandolin but enjoys voice most of all. Darryl has been a member of the Manitoba Opera Chorus since 1994. He joined the Little Opera Company for its 1995 performance of *Amahl and the Night Visitors* and returned for the 2006 production of *The Snow Queen*. Darryl also plays and sings as a solo performer specializing in cowboy music of the 1930's. Darryl mentors students in his area of the Interlake on various instruments.



Margot Harding (Mme Goldentrill), soprano, studied for 6 months at the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria, and then returned to Canada where she proceeded to win many competitions across North America. She has sung with the Salzburg opera, Manitoba Opera, the Vancouver Opera, the Winnipeg Symphony, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, the Manitoba Theatre Centre, the National Arts Centre, Rainbow Stage and others. She has sung in The New Music Festival, premièring The Falcon's Trumpet, and has been featured on Arts and Minds on Bravo. Margot was also in Randolph Peters' opera, *Nosferatu* and on the theatre side, played the coveted role of Sharon Graham in the Canadian premiere of *Master Class* at the Manitoba Theatre Centre and the National Arts Centre. Margot has also sung many times as a featured artist with WSO in its Light Classics series, *Mad About Mozart* and various others. With the RWB, Margot played the Queen of the

Night in the world premiere of *The Magic Flute* in Winnipeg and Ottawa. She has appeared in *Mozart Comes Alive!* with the WSO. Margot has been in many productions with The Little Opera Company and is very pleased to be back.



Lara Secord-Haid (Miss Silverpeal), coloratura soprano, is a native Winnipegger in her third year at the New England Conservatory where she studies with Lorraine Nubar. She is very passionate about both music and theatre and enjoys dance as a hobby. Lara began her study of voice with her teacher and mentor Diane Berger at the Manitoba Conservatory and is ever grateful for the wonderful education that she received there at an early age through the advanced vocal program. Lara spent a summer studying voice in Italy with Nico Castel and Enza Ferrari. She also spent a summer in Nice, France studying with Lorraine Nubar and Dalton Baldwin.

Lara received a Silver medal from the Royal Conservatory of Music for her grade 7 Voice exam in 2005, and in 2006, she competed in the Winnipeg Music Festival, winning the Alma Wynn memorial trophy. Her Most recent projects have included the role of Prima Donna in Donizetti's *Viva la Mamma* and the title role in

Mozart's *Zaide* at the New England Conservatory. She also has appeared with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra singing *The Bear* by Howard Blake and in the WSO summer concert series. This summer she looks forward to playing Miss Silverpeal in Mozart's *The Impresario*.